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ear Citizen,

The Secretary of State's goal is 100 percent participation of eligible citizens in our elections.

The health and vitality of a democracy rest on the "consent of the governed," and it is through the participation of every citizen that we will achieve this goal.

California has been very proactive in reducing or eliminating barriers to voting: All citizens can register and vote by mail, and counties are required to ensure that persons who are elderly or disabled have access to a polling place.

The information in this guide describes the voting rights of those who are elderly or disabled. Please share it with your family and friends. Working together we can move toward a barrier-free election system.

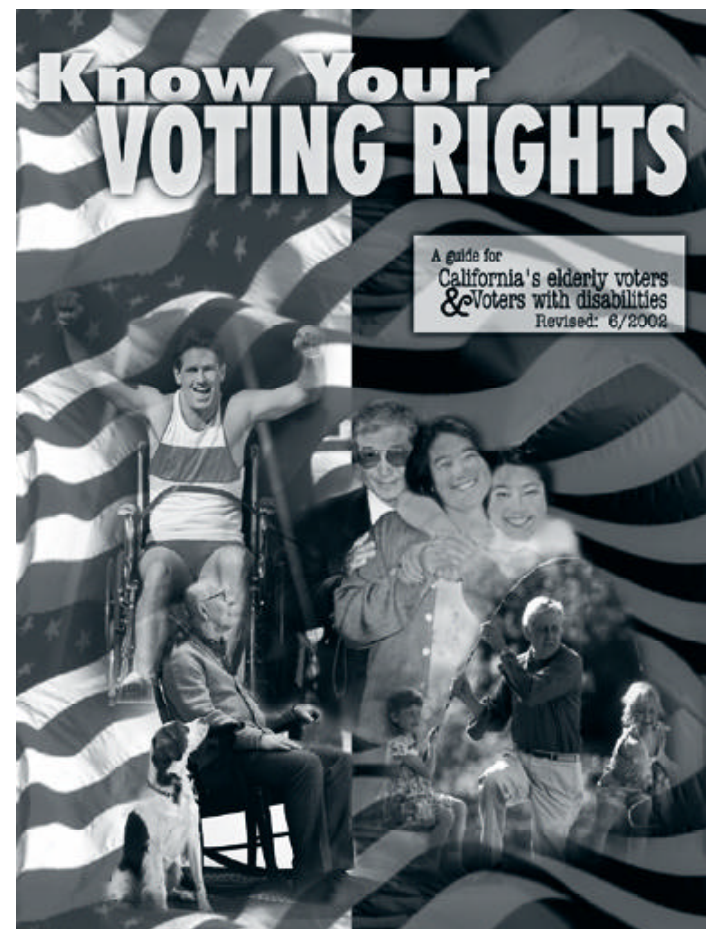


**REGISTER TO VOTE**  
Voter Registration/Voter Fraud Hotline  
Call 1.800.345.VOTE  
[www.ss.ca.gov](http://www.ss.ca.gov)



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Place  
stamp  
here



# Voting Rights for the Disabled and Elderly

California has a tradition of being sensitive to the needs of voters who are elderly or disabled. California has many laws and programs to ensure that you have access to all phases of our democratic system.

**Curbside voting:** If a polling place is not accessible, you may approach as near as possible to the voting area and request *curbside voting*. Elections officials will bring you the voting materials, whether you are actually at a curb, in a car, or otherwise located outside the polls.

**State Voter Information Guide cassette tapes:** The Secretary of State produces cassette tapes of the State Voter Information Guide to allow blind and visually-impaired voters access to the titles and summaries, impartial analyses, and pro and con ballot measure arguments and rebuttals. These audio tapes are available at no cost to you by calling 1.800.345.VOTE.

**Assistance in voting:** If you are unable to mark your ballot yourself, you may choose up to two people to help you cast your vote. The persons may not be your employer or your employer's agent, or your labor union leader or agent.

**Neighborhood precincts:** California law limits precinct size to no more than 1,000 to 1,250 registered voters depending on the size of the county.

**Sample ballot designations:** Mailed to each registered voter, all sample ballots contain a symbol, which is usually located on the back cover next to the address of your assigned polling place, that indicates whether your polling place is accessible to the disabled. If your polling place is not accessible, you may request to be assigned to another polling place that is accessible. You need only to call your county elections office.

**Accessibility:** Federal law requires voting booths and election materials to be easily used by elderly or disabled voters. In addition, state guidelines promote accessibility for persons who are elderly, or hearing, vision or mobility impaired.

**Absentee voting:** Any registered voter in California may vote by mail. To vote by mail, complete and return the application included with your sample ballot. Any application is acceptable if it contains your printed name and residence address, the address where you want to receive your absentee ballot, your signature, and the name and date of the election for which you want an absentee ballot.

After you vote your ballot, mail it back to your county elections official. Your voted ballot must be received by the time the polls close on election day, which is 8pm in California. Do not forget postage.

**Late absentee ballot requests:** If, in the seven days before the election, you find you will be unable to vote in person on election day, you may still request an absentee ballot. You must make a written request, signed under penalty of perjury, and deliver it to the county elections official.

**Permanent absentee voter provisions:** The law permits any voter to request permanent absentee voter status. If you apply, you will automatically receive an absentee ballot for each election. Your permanent absentee voter status will only be canceled if you fail to vote in a statewide election. To apply, call your county elections official, use the application form mailed to you with your sample ballot, or download an application from [www.ss.ca.gov/elections/elections\\_m.htm](http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/elections_m.htm).

**Secretary of State's website:** For more information on election related services available to people who are elderly or disabled, visit the Secretary of State's Elections Division website at [www.ss.ca.gov/elections/elections.htm](http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/elections.htm). From this site you'll be able to access the on-line voter registration form, download an absentee ballot request form and even order additional copies of this brochure. You may also read the *Voter Information Guide and Ballot Pamphlet* on-line and get real-time election results on election night. Visit often, as the site is frequently updated and improved.

## General Voter Eligibility Information

You are eligible to register to vote in California if you are:

- 18 years of age or older by election day, and
- a U.S. citizen, and
- a resident of California, and
- not in prison or on parole for conviction of a felony, and
- not involuntarily confined in a mental hospital because of having pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity, judicially determined to be incompetent to stand trial, convicted as a sex offender with a mental disability, or otherwise have been convicted of a felony and are being treated at a state hospital.

## Important state phone numbers:

Voter registration forms are available from your county elections official, in many public buildings, and from numerous civic and political party organizations.

Secretary of State - Elections Division:  
916.657.2166  
[www.ss.ca.gov/elections/elections.htm](http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/elections.htm)

Department of Rehabilitation:  
916.445.8638

Questions or concerns about voting:  
Call your county clerk/registrar of voters

Or call 1.800.345.VOTE